

**Saint Paul Planning Commission
City Hall Conference Center
15 Kellogg Boulevard West**

Minutes February 9, 2007

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, February 9, 2007, at 8:00 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

Commissioners Present: Mmes. Donnelly-Cohen, Faricy, Lu, McCall, Morton, Porter, Smitten and; and Messrs. Alton, Bellus, Commers, Cudahy, Gordon, Johnson, Kong, Kramer, Mejia, Nelson and Rosemark.

Commissioners: Ms. *Trevino and Messrs. *Dandrea, *Goodlow

Absent:
*Excused

Also Present: Larry Soderholm, Planning Administrator; Patricia James, Craig Blakley, PED staff, Merritt Clap-Smith, Luis Pereira, Yang Zhang, Shawntera Hardy, Christina Danico, Andrew Jacobson (intern) and Kate Fleming, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

I. Approval of minutes January 26, 2007.

MOTION: *Commissioner Johnson moved approval of the minutes of January 26, 2007. Commissioner Bellus seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

II. Chair's Announcements

Chair Alton called attention to the press release on February 6, 2007 describing the *Invest Saint Paul* initiative to focus on strengthening neighborhoods that have been disproportionately affected by mortgage foreclosures and increased vacancy rates.

III. Planning Administrator's Announcements

Larry Soderholm reported on planning-related business at the City Council for last week and their agenda for next week.

IV. Zoning Committee

OLD BUSINESS

06-292-216 Victory Through Faith – Conditional Use Permit for community residential facility (Department of Human Services licensed-chemical dependency) for 46 residents. 869 5th Street E, NW corner at Mendota. (Patricia James, 651/266-6639)

MOTION: *Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to deny the conditional use permit. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

NEW BUSINESS

07-008-198 Alex Haug – Re-establishment of nonconforming use permit to allow a silk-screening shop. 938 6th Street E, SW corner at Forest. (Luis Pereira, 651/266-6591)

MOTION: *Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the Re-establishment of nonconforming use permit with conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

07-008-031 Sunlight Services – Conditional Use Permit for assisted living facility for 40 residents. 1105 Hazel Street N, SW corner at Jessamine. (Patricia James, 651/266-6639)

MOTION: *Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the conditional use permit with conditions. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

05-099-048 Holman Field Drainage Improvements – Notification to Planning Commission of noncompliance with approved site plan (File No. 05-099-045) and consideration of public hearing for revocation or modification of the approval. 644 Bayfield. (Tom Beach, 651/266-9086)

MOTION: *Commissioner Morton moved to set a public hearing for March 15, 2007, based on the request of staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kramer.*

Commissioner Morton announced the Zoning Committee Agenda for the February 15, 2007 meeting.

V. Comprehensive Planning Committee

Chair Donnelly-Cohen stated the next meeting will be on February 20, 2007. All of the Comp Plan chapter task forces have been named and meetings have either started or are now scheduled.

VI. Neighborhood and Current Planning Committee

Chair McCall announced each of the following items.

Snelling Hamline Neighborhood Plan Summary – Release the summary for public review and set a public hearing date for March 9, 2007. (*Merritt Clapp-Smith, 651/266-6547*)

MOTION: *Commissioner McCall moved the Neighborhood and Current Planning Committee's recommendation to release the plan summary for public review and set a public hearing for March 9, 2007. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

Thomas-Dale (District 7) Plan Summary – Release summary for public review and set public hearing date for March 9, 2007. (*Shawntera Hardy, 651/266-6562*)

MOTION: *Commissioner McCall moved the Neighborhood and Current Planning Committee's recommendation to release the plan summary for public review and set a public hearing for March 9, 2007. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

Arcade Street Small Area Plan – Adopt resolution approving the summary of the Arcade Street Small Area Plan, with two modifications, and recommending adoption by the City Council. (*Yang Zhang, 651/266-6659*)

MOTION: *Commissioner McCall moved the Neighborhood and Current Planning Committee's recommendation to approve the summary with modifications. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

E. Grand Avenue Parking – Report to the Community. Guest presentation by Jeff Roy, Executive Director, Summit Hill Association, and Craig Blakely, PED. (*Craig Blakely, 651/266-6697*)

Mr. Jeff Roy explained that the E. Grand Avenue Parking Task Force worked for two years. Its work was marked by enthusiasm, great expectations, building of relationships between businesses and residents, creative visioning, and also, of course, by many frustrations. The task force never achieved a consensus about solutions or actions. It did issue a report to document the data that was collected and the alternative solutions that were evaluated. But in the end, Mr. Roy felt the task force process achieved some successful outcomes and brought the leadership of the Summit Hill community to a new level of understanding regarding the Grand Avenue parking issue. They understand the need for win-win solutions, and are now informed about a new paradigm for dealing with parking in today's urban environment.

Unlike previous efforts, which grew out of a specific problem (like the 1992 petition for residential permit parking), this effort resulted from Mayor Kelly responding to a question at a GABA meeting by assigning City staff to "fix" the problem. GABA asked SHA to appoint a task force. Given that parking has been a difficult and emotional issue, the task force established ground rules which were reviewed at the start of each meeting and referred to again during the meeting, if necessary to manage conflict.

Mr. Roy said that one of the ground rules was that final recommendations would be done by consensus, not by majority vote. The rule was helpful for keeping everyone at the table talking to one another, but in the end it precluded the task force from coming forward with a single comprehensive parking plan for Grand Avenue. The task force achieved consensus on 10 common principles, which are noteworthy and will be the starting point for future efforts to resolve the parking problem. The Summit Hill Association has now established a parking committee that will be convening soon to build on the work of the task force.

Craig Blakely described his experience with neighborhood economic development at PED since 1989. He has negotiated shared parking, financed parking lots, developed legislation for Parking Improvement Districts, and cut the deals for the House of Hope and Grand and Snelling shared parking lots. He explained why the Grand and Snelling lot has been a success, whereas the House of Hope lot was not and was subsequently leased for college parking. This was his third Grand Avenue parking task force.

Mr. Blakely explained that the recently published work of Donald Shoup has provoked fundamental rethinking about parking by applying market forces. The Zoning Code requires off-street parking, which is almost always free. When parking is free, the demand for it is unconstrained by the costs of providing it, and this demand is then written into zoning standards. Therefore, in many parts of our city, there is too much asphalt. Market forces are needed to allocate supply and demand more efficiently.

Shoup believes that management of on-street parking maximizes the use of off street resources. New technology can help with enforcement of on-street parking regulations. License Plate Recognition (LPR) technology can result in a quantum increase in parking enforcement. If parking meters are installed, some of the net revenue from the meters can be dedicated to improvements along the commercial strip that make it more attractive and more competitive in the real estate market.

Mr. Blakely said that the task force's report includes different written visions for the future—one based on a continuation of the status quo for parking, and others with a Parking Improvement District or other changes. He was an advocate for making changes that would regulate on-street parking for higher turnover and less employee parking, which in turn would provide the impetus for better utilization and improvement of off-street parking.

Mr. Blakely said the Grand Avenue Business Association ought to become more involved in helping resolve the commercial parking problem. Employees should also be represented in the process. In the next phase, the consensus rule should be change, since it gives everyone a veto.

Discussion followed.

Chair Alton asked if the Grand Avenue area stakeholders agreed on anything about parking.

Merritt Clapp-Smith answered that the stakeholders would agree that there is inefficient utilization of existing parking despite complaints of a parking shortage. She stated that staff from PED, LIEP, and Public Works have started a parking policy work group. They are taking a comprehensive look at City parking policies and requirements and possible changes that would make them clearer more appropriate to current needs.

VII. Communications Commission

No report

VIII. Task Force Reports

Commissioner Faricy reported on the Ford Site Plan Task Force. She thanked Merritt Clapp-Smith and Luis Pereira for planning and executing an excellent first meeting. The meeting took place at the Ford Plant on February 5, 2007. Twenty-five members of the task force attended and introduce themselves. They all will bring a great deal of expertise to the table. There were welcomes from the Mayor Chris Coleman, Pat Harris, legislators, and also Jay Gardner, who represents the real estate arm of Ford Motor. Mr. Gardner, is not a member of the task force but will attend some meetings, talked about the Ford Company's expectations. They hope the little league ball fields will be kept and maintained by the community and they hope there will be a lasting tribute to company, which has been on the site for 80 years. Shaun Barts was the twenty-fifth member to be appointed by Chair Alton so the Highland Business Association is represented. Commissioner Faricy is contacting Senator Dick Cohen for clarification about legislation he has proposed regarding the Ford site. The task force meetings will be held on the first and third Monday of the month from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Ford Plant. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 20, 2007, because of President's Day.

Commissioner Commers stated the next Transportation Comp Plan Task Force meeting will be on February 22, 2007, 4:00 p.m. at the old Lexington Library. Commissioner Bellus will be speaking on the *Lens for the Future*.

Commissioner Nelson stated the Como Avenue Task Force meeting will be held on February 15, 2007.

Commissioner Kramer gave a report on the first meeting of the Land Use Comp Plan Task Force. There next meeting will be March 14, 2007.

Commissioner Smitten reminded the committee of the LRT open houses on February 15th and 16th. The next meeting will be held on February 14, 2007, and will be a joint task force meeting of the Downtown and University Task Forces. They will discuss the draft Development Strategy. The Downtown Task Force will be meeting on February 27, 2007, to discuss any changes that need to be made. There will be a meeting on March 13, 2007 and is tentative the last meeting. She gave an update on the Loop alignment.

Larry Soderholm introduced Andrew Jacobson, a new PED planning aide who will work on the Comprehensive Plan. He is a recent graduate of St. Olaf College who is exploring city planning as a career.

IX. Old Business

X New Business

XI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Recorded and prepared by
Kate Fleming, Planning Commission Secretary
Planning and Economic Development Department,
City of Saint Paul

Respectfully submitted,

Approved _____
(Date)

Larry Soderholm, AICP
Planning Administrator

Marilyn Porter
Secretary of the Planning Commission

PED\Fleming\February 9, 2007